

726/Puerto Rico?, which, however, never belonged to our Caribs. One
648 of the natives of Dominica told Father Raymond of a raid in which
they captured a large number of Negroes and butchered one of our
Fathers and smoked him to eat, but he had aroused in them such a
[266] reluctance that they never dared eat him. The narrator affirmed
that he was one of those present at that occasion. For some time now
they have abstained from eating the flesh of Christians.

4/1 Their weapons are the boutou and the bow and arrow. The boutou
is a sort of flat club, square at the end, 2 inches thick and 2 1/2
or 3 feet long, made of green wood, brazilwood, letter(?) wood, or
some other very heavy and massive wood. They cut a design on
[53] the end with their knife and fill it with wet mouchache, which is
fine manioc flour, for a rather pretty effect. Whoever is hit full
force with this club is crushed. Their bows are made of brazilwood,
which is rather stiff. Their cords are made of pita. Their arrows
are made of certain smooth stalks that grow at the tops of reeds and
which are tufted. These stalks are very light; and at the end of them
they put a shaft of green wood or other very hard wood, and make
notches on it as on a saw, only bigger so that the arrow cannot be
withdrawn without tearing the flesh around it and enlarging the
wound. They also use the spiny tail of the ray for arrow tips. They
rarely use iron. They poison the arrow with a venom so malignant
that without a prompt remedy one dies of the smallest wound.
They feather their arrows with parrot feathers or with others. To
start fires they shoot arrows wrapped in flaming cotton.

727 After the combat, they pillage thoroughly. If there are any dead
266 enemies they eat the arms and feet, and smoke the rest for their
return home. If they have taken any prisoners, they keep the males
to be killed and the females to [71] enslave. Each piece of plunder
belongs to the one who takes it. When they want to kill an
Allouague, the one who captured him holds a drinking party and
invites his friends. They tie the unhappy captive in a bed and starve
him for a long time. When everyone is assembled his master leads
the captive in and delivers the first light blow with his boutou and
the others then follow suit. After beating him to death, they cut
him into pieces and eat part of him at the time. Each one carries
a piece home which he eats with his family in great solemnity.

627 When one Carib kills another, they have no other justice but
what vengeance the parents of the killed man take, if the guilty one
does not pacify them with presents.

241 To clear land for a garden the Caribs have work parties. They cut off branches, pile up wood and leaves, and burn off the land in order to prepare it for planting. These work parties are organized in the following way. They have a drinking party in which all the strong men are requested to join in the work. Later that morning they fell a square patch of wood 100 to 200 feet on a side. The wood is knocked on the ground in disorder. They drink the rest of the day and the following night as payment. Six weeks later they set fire to the field at noon when the breeze blows. They set the fire on the side of the field to the wind, and the greater part of the refuse is burned. Then they hold another drinking party in order to pick up and complete what is left to be done. They hold work parties also in other situations and replace by this means the absence of servants and laborers which are unknown among them. [86]
At their feasts they eat as little as they drink much. [71]

574 When the Caribs have completed their tasks on a work party they have a drinking party where drink is served by the man who has sent for them. When they have drunk everything they go to their host and say "My friend, I leave. I have drunk all the drink which you have prepared in return for my labor. Good-by." [362]

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[674] The Caribs do not prevent either men or women from becoming drunk. But they do not allow men to seduce other men's wives, while these women are drunk. [319]

The Caribs are so vile in their drunkenness that when they feel themselves to be too full they turn their head aside and often even without leaving their place in the company, they put their fingers into their mouths to bring up everything they had swallowed. [223]

● 627 Vengeance rules among the Caribs, but it is only carried out at their drinking parties. The offended person is careful to remain sober in order to better the success of his plan. He is not punished for his deed if he has done it to avenge the death of one of his relatives. But if he has unjustly killed a man, it will not fail to pass that sooner or later the relatives of the dead man will put him to death, unless the murderer quickly flees to another island. [370]

755 Often they suck the sick part and go immediately outside the house to vomit what they call the venom. In this way the poor sick person is healed more by imagination than he is in fact, and he is more bewitched than disillusioned. When this ceremony is entirely over, the devil of medicine stirs up all the food prepared for him and appears to be feasting although everything remains uneaten, as we have explained. Roughly kicking the ground he finally takes his leave shaking his hands and snapping his fingers.

776 It sometimes happens that a person summons several boyes, and
755 each of them causes his own god to appear. This is worse than the devilry of Chaumont, for these devils wrangle among themselves insulting each other a thousand times; according to the Caribs, they even come to blows among themselves. When this happens these poor barbarians become pale and are compelled to run away for fear of being involved and becoming subjected to very strong blows.

755 When the sickness is healed the cured man makes a banquet for the ichéiri or false god and the boye does not fail to be there. At the end of the banquet both of them blacken the cured man with Genipa apples and he becomes as beautiful as his medicine, that is to say as black as the devil.

776 A young French boy who lived among them as a slave for three or four years asked a boye one day to describe the appearance of his god. The boye answered him that he was so old, he was all bent and that his walking stick had become glistening under the weight of supporting

757 him. The devils sometimes lodge themselves in the bones of the dead, which are taken from a grave and wrapped in cotton. Oracles are rendered from these bones when the devil is questioned, and it is said that it is the very soul of the dead who speaks. These talking

754 bones are used to bewitch anyone who has angered them. This is the way they do it. They take the remains of the food or drink of the enemy, or any other personal belonging. When they have encircled the object with these bones the enemy immediately begins to lose his ordinary vigor, a consuming fever ruins him, and as the spell runs its course the man dies a lingering death. No one can give such a man a remedy for the recovery of his health.

754 Father Raymond [Breton] has seen a man who wished to take
● 627 vengeance for the murder of his brother. He made a mistake and

~~751~~ killed an innocent man instead of the man who was guilty. The relatives of the innocent man who had been so unfortunately murdered decided to take revenge, without considering that his death was caused by mistake rather than through malice. They reddened cotton with blood from the man who had been murdered and placed it with human bones. It was immediately seen that the murderer began to lose his healthy appearance. After a gradual decline in health and wasting away over a span of two years, he died just as he was planning to come to Guadaloupe and receive baptism from Father Raymond [Breton] who was staying there at that time.

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~~532~~ The Caribs have ugly little dolls of cotton, and it is said that the devil speaks to them through the doll's mouth. They throw them into the sea when they plan to take a sea journey and if they sink to the bottom it is a sign of storm and of risk. If they float on the water it is taken as certain prediction of fine weather.

~~778~~ Mr. du Parquet, Lieutenant General for His Majesty in Martinique, assured me that the Caribs of the island had found in the caverns certain idols made of cotton and shaped like men. They had small grains of sea savonet in place of eyes and wore a kind of cotton cap on their heads. The Caribs affirmed that these were the gods belonging to the Igneri whom they had massacred. But no Carib dared to enter that cavern, and they trembled with fear when they approached it.

Mr. du Parquet having heard about it sent some of his people with the order to take these idols out and bring them to his house. The Caribs found out about the plan and were so terrified that they told their fears to the French who became uneasy, [with the result that] the first two to step into this cavern passed out in a faint. They were carried out half dead and the others dared go no farther. A little later braver people were sent who had not talked to the Caribs, and they entered the cave and secretly removed the idols.

These idols were the cause of a strange adventure which happened to a captain from St. Malo. Mr. du Parquet put the idols into a wooden box and gave them to this captain, without telling him what it was. He gave him [the captain] the order to send the box to the late Duke of Orleans with letters which he also gave him for this Prince. This poor captain, having been unlucky enough to be captured by a frigate out of San Sebastián, was taken to Spain. The

266 women's share is the legs and thighs. The others eat the other parts indifferently. The meat is eaten with fury rather than with pleasure, through revenge rather than to feed themselves. They do not enjoy its taste, for most of them become sick after this terrible meal. It is a fantastic and amazing sight to see the madness or more exactly fury of the women while eating the flesh of their enemies. They chew it, chew it again, tighten it between their teeth and are so afraid to lose a morsel that they lick the grill sticks on which some spots of grease have fallen.

When everyone in the assembly has eaten the meat, each one carries some home with him to eat at another time. While I was in Martinique I saw a Carib carry a roasted leg into a house, the leg being as dry and hard as wood. He invited each one to join him. He said that those who had eaten some Allouague—for this is what he called his cooked meat—would become very courageous. Among the Caribs those who have eaten the most are the most respected.

The Caribs have tasted men from every nation that has visited them. I have heard them say several times that among all the Christians, the French were the best and the most delicate, in contrast to the Spaniards who were so tough that the Caribs had difficulty eating them. A little time prior to the occupation of St. Kitts by the French, the Caribs raided Puerto Rico. Among their other crimes they killed and roasted one of our missionaries. After eating him most of them died, the survivors afterwards being afflicted with a very great sickness. Several of the Carib survivors stated they had not eaten a morsel of him, but had left him roasted on the grill without being able to touch him. I think they only say this, for the simplest among them naïvely confess that they devoured him. Since that time they have not eaten any more Christians, contenting themselves with killing them and abandoning them where they fall.

627 Individual feuds result in duels with clubs. A single well struck blow sends a man to the next world. The killer must leave the country or expose himself to as many fights as the dead man has relatives, unless by means of many presents he is able to soften their anger. He can never feel safe, however, for at the first drinking party or assembly, one of the dead man's relatives may treacherously kill him with a club blow on the head.

- 627 I heard it was said to Mr. de Parquet that two Caribs were fighting a duel, shooting arrows at each other. During the time it takes to say the 51st Psalm, they were in continual movement, and to avoid each other's arrows they remained at a distance from each other. When they were forced to separate it was found that they had done no harm to one other.

Enough has now been said concerning warfare among the Caribs.

11. Disease, Death, and Funerals

- 164 There is no rule so general that it allows no exception. In the first part of this chapter I described the robust physical condition of the Caribs. It should not be inferred from these remarks that European diseases are rare among them. More precisely, it should be said that the Caribs suffer from these diseases less frequently than we do in Europe. This is fortunate for them, for if they recover from their diseases this is due more to the powerful efforts of nature than to the remedies and treatment they receive.

- 757 It is certain that they have very excellent remedies. But if a remedy is very successful for one disease they may use it for all other sicknesses; they do not know the causes of sickness nor the qualities of their herbs, which often do them more harm than good. As far as good treatment is concerned, they do not know what it is to coddle the sick, and even those who are about to die are fed as if they were completely well. They especially fear smallpox because they have no treatment for it, and it often ravages them in the same way that the plague does in Europe. Very few among them bear its scars because most of them die of it. In the wet season they suffer from fevers which they cure by an external remedy; on the wrist and forehead they place some cachima [cachimilla?] leaves and other herbs crushed together. They also use a shred of pimento, as we have said, which they rub and pass over the eyes to make the fever pass away. They are also tormented at all times of the year by an eye sickness which I shall describe in my next chapter, because the French are also afflicted by it. This disease is communicable not only from family to family but even from island to island.